

REMARKS

Applicant thanks Examiner for the careful consideration given the present application.

By this response, claims 25-26 have been amended. No claims have been canceled and no claims have been added. Thus, claims 1, 4-5, 10, 18-23, 25-39 remain pending.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

OBJECTIONS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 25-26 were objected for certain informalities. Claims 25-26 have been amended to depend from claim 23. In light of the amendments to claims 25-26, reconsideration and withdrawal of these objections are respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 4-5, 10, 18-23, 25-39 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Suzuki et al. (U.S. Pat. App. No. 10/766,565) in view of Tanaka et al. (U.S. Pat. App. No. 10/473,803). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The present invention relates to a filter system for an electronic equipment enclosure that includes a particle filter and a vapor filter ***positioned downstream from the particle filter.*** As disclosed in the instant application, positioning the vapor filter downstream from the particle filter protects the typically much more expensive vapor filter from particles that could otherwise clog or damage the vapor filter. Thus,

positioning the vapor filter downstream from the particle filter extends the useful life of the vapor filter and therefore reduces overall operating costs of the electronic equipment enclosure.

To this end, independent claim 1 recites a filter system comprising a first HEPA filter element mounted to an electronic equipment enclosure, and a second water vapor filter element mounted to the enclosure *downstream of the first filter element such that air in said flow path passing through said first filter element thereafter passes through said second filter element, said first filter element protecting and extending the useful life of said second filter element.* (Emphasis added). Similarly, independent claim 27 recites an electronic equipment enclosure comprising a HEPA filter for filtering particulate matter from air, and a *water vapor filter positioned downstream of the HEPA filter.* (Emphasis added).

In rejecting these claims, the Patent Office relies on Fig. 9 of Suzuki. However, Fig. 9 of Suzuki clearly illustrates (by way of an arrow indicating the direction of airflow) a particle filter 5 positioned downstream of both a gaseous contaminant capture medium 6 and a dehumidifying agent 8. Stated another way, while the present invention teaches a vapor filter positioned downstream of a particle filter, Suzuki discloses its capture medium 6 and dehumidifying agent 8 positioned upstream of a particle filter. Thus, Suzuki teaches away from claims 1 and 27 rather than rendering such claims obvious.

Accordingly, even assuming for the sake of argument that it would have been obvious to combine Suzuki and Tanaka in the manner suggested, the combination would still fail to teach a vapor filter positioned downstream of a particle filter as recited

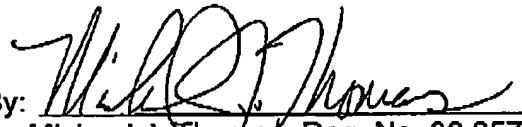
by claims 1 and 27. Accordingly, the Patent Office is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the Section 103 rejection of claims 1 and 27.

Claims 4-5, 10, 18-23 and 25-26 depend from claim 1, and claims 28-39 depend from claim 27. Accordingly, these claims are allowable for at least the same reasons as those presented above in regard to claims 1 and 27.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (314) 726-7500.

Respectfully submitted,

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